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## WORK OF THE ARUNDEL SOCIETY.

The exhibition of color prints from lithographic stones after old Italian, Flemish, and Dutch masters, which was recently arranged for the Lenox Library, New York, calls special attention to a form of art which has ever been popular with print collectors, and incidentally makes pertinent a short account of a devoted association in England, which for fifty years or more sought to popularize color work and to put before the public at large fac-similes or reproductions as faithful as possible to the originals of many of the world's masterpieces. I refer, of course, to the Arundel society, whose work was generously represented in the exhibition. In these days of striving after new effects, or of developing new means, the efforts of former



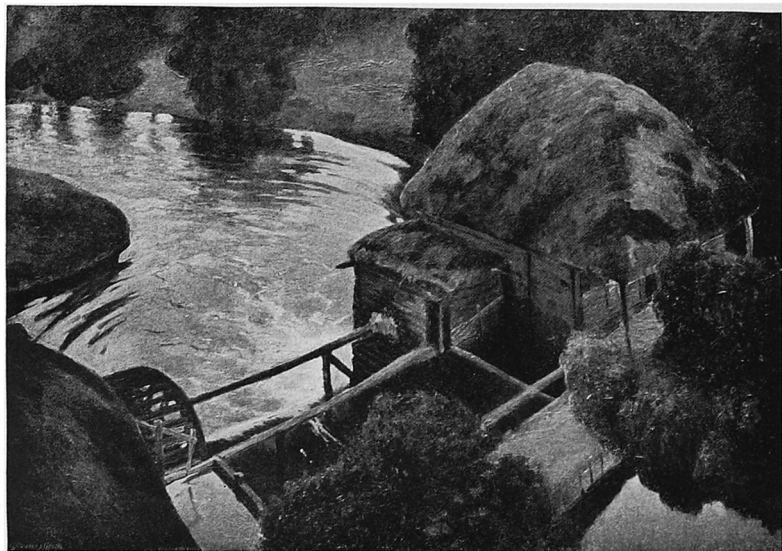
IN THE GARDEN  
By Josef Mehoffer

workers who have applied themselves to the popularizing of art are apt to be forgotten, and the following little bit of history, therefore, scarcely old, but well-nigh forgotten, will be of interest to the readers of BRUSH AND PENCIL.

The Arundel Society, or the Society for Promoting the Knowledge of Art, was founded in 1848, by a number of art amateurs, including John Ruskin; Layard, the excavator of Assyrian cities; Lord Herbert of Lea; and the Marquis of Lansdowne. The Dilettante Society had already done something to perpetuate works of Italian art which seemed likely to be destroyed, owing to the indifference of Italians

and the disturbances agitating the peninsula during the former half of the last century, but these gentlemen were concerned—on the one hand, at the ignorance of the British public in regard to primitive Italian painting; and on the other, that frescoes, oils, and tempera pictures would disappear from the face of the earth, leaving no accurate reproduction behind.

So the Arundel Society was formed, with a name in honor of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, Lord High Marshal of England,



THE MILLRACE  
By Ferdynand Ruszczyk

who in his day was spoken of as "the Mæcenas of the politer arts," "the father of vertu," etc. He seems to have been the first Englishman to have imported any great number of statues from Italy and Greece, with which, about 1614, he adorned the gardens of Arundel house. He used as his scout to obtain pictures and sculptures one William Petty, an uncle of the Sir William Petty who figures so extensively in those lucubrations which Samuel Pepys intrusted in cipher to his inimitable diary.

At first the Arundel Society went in for Italian frescoes, partly because Michael Angelo is reported to have extolled fresco as a masculine art, calling oil-painting feminine, partly because the frescoes in Italy were in a dangerous condition and seemed to need saving



IN DEEP SORROW  
By Theodor Axentowicz

by reproduction more than any other branch of painting. Oils were to come in the second rank. As for sculpture, it was decided that a separate department should be created for that. Later on the primitive Flemish and Dutch pictures were undertaken. Thus the great apostle of the pre-Raphaelites was one of the promoters of a publication which was to rescue from oblivion, if the originals perished, the early Italian works he so greatly admired and also to popularize the primitives.

How well the work was done could be seen at the Lenox Library by those who happen never to have seen the Arundel prints. It was found that England could not supply the craftsmen needed for the undertaking. So a German, Herr Grüner, was engaged, and the lithographic stones were engraved by a German firm. The art of lithography itself may be claimed by Germany. That country supplies the best quarry for the stones hitherto discovered, and to the present day, when lithography has dwindled in importance, notwithstanding the occasional revival of it by Whistler and other artists for their own works, Germany remains the great home of color printing from the stone. This, however, does not mean that in Germany the services of photography have been neglected.

In addition to this way of getting reproductions of the old masters, the Arundel Society began a series of direct copies, instituted a Copying Fund from the entrance fees of members and voluntary subscriptions, and made exhibitions of these copies in the rooms of the society. Until he was incapacitated by illness, John Ruskin adhered to this practice on his own account, employing painstaking artists of whom

he approved to reproduce in oils or water-colors a great variety of Italian work, such as the mosaics in Venice and Orvieto, for museums in England. But whether it was that a large number of the best works had been reproduced, or because popular favor drifted away from these copies, direct, or for lithographic multiplication, the fact is that the ardor has given out, and the Arundel is no longer what it was. One may say that it has reached the historical stage when it is time to sum up what it did for good in its time.

If one takes such a picture as the "Annunciation," by Fra Angelico, one of the many small pictures he painted on the walls of the cells of the monastery in Florence, one sees that an attempt has been made to reproduce it as it probably looked when just painted, not as it looks in this age. The lithographic system is not direct. There is the man between who made the copy in colors, and then there are the men who engraved for each color the stone that belongs to that color. The person who superintends the printing is, of course, very important; he must not only understand printing, but have an eye for color which few possess. What is the result? The Fra Angelico tells us. Here is a neat, clean, reasonable impression at great cost of time and money, from which the savor of the original has evaporated. The result must be unsatisfactory in the extreme, unless that original, to begin with, is of the same neat, clean, and reasonable sort as the copy—which the real masterpieces are never!

This has become in time so clear to connoisseurs that they often have pre-



A SPRING SONG  
By Acek Malcewski

ferred a good photograph of the original colored on the spot by some artist who has the requisite sensitiveness to color, one by no means always found even among artists of no small fame.

One might have supposed, and doubtless the eminent dilettante who founded the society did suppose that frescoes, at any rate, owing to the somewhat hard and flat method of their making, would be peculiarly grateful in adapting themselves to the old-fashioned color lithography. Yet if one examines the print after Massaccio and Filippino Lippi, "Sts. Peter and Paul Raising the King's Son from the Dead," in the Beancacci Chapel, at the Carmine, Florence, one sees that the grainy quality of the fresco is not reproduced and the peculiar cool depth of the original is missed. On the other hand, the oils by the brothers van Eyck lack the richness and glow of that medium. There is, in fact, a deadly effect of average, of commonplace, over most of these color prints which seriously impairs their value to artists and sensitive amateurs. Ruskin may not have felt this, for he was absorbed in many other things, and indeed approached art from the literary side, his great value as a critic consisting in his power to rouse people to think of art through his splendid gift of rhetoric.

Comparing the modern color-print as aided by the photograph with these color-lithographs one finds that within certain limitations the later is the better method. It does not eliminate entirely the man between. But while restricting the number of colors which it can reproduce with faithfulness, it does render exactly the drawing of the original and some of the colors. It will even reproduce the grain of the wood or canvas, a thing that is of great importance in many old pictures; and while by no means a method which is perfect, yet on the whole it approaches far closer to the original than the cold and lifeless products of the lithographic stone.

N. A.



## SOME RECENT ART SALES

The paintings owned by the estate of Henry Sheldon of Brooklyn were sold at public sale in Philadelphia. Among the most noteworthy pictures was J. L. Gérôme's "Tiger Hunt in India," which brought \$1,300, and François Augusti Bonheur's "Castle in Fontainebleau Forest," for which \$1,800 was paid. A large Bouguereau, entitled "Innocence," representing a mother coming down some steps and carrying a child and a lamb in her arms, brought \$7,400. A Ziem, representing the "Grand Canal, Port du Rialto, Venice," sold for \$3,900. And an exquisite pastel by Jules Breton, "The Gleaner," brought \$3,000. A J. L. Gérôme, an interior scene of "Prayer in